

**Amendments to the Claims**

Please amend claims 1, 3, 5 and 9 as indicated in the listing of claims.

Please cancel claims 4 and 16-66 without prejudice or disclaimer.

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A method of modulating myostatin activation, comprising contacting a latent myostatin complex comprising a myostatin pro-peptide and a myostatin C-terminal fragment, and a metalloprotease that can cleave the myostatin pro-peptide, with an agent that increases or decreases proteolytic cleavage of the pro-peptide by the metalloprotease, thereby modulating myostatin activation.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the metalloprotease is a bone morphogenic protein-1/tolloid (BMP-1/TLD) family member.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the BMP-1/~~TLD~~ family member is BMP-1, ~~TLD~~, ~~tolloid-like protein-1 (TLL-1)~~, or ~~tolloid-like protein-2 (TLL-2)~~.

4. (Canceled).

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, which comprises increasing myostatin activation, said method comprising contacting the latent myostatin complex and metalloprotease with an agent that increases proteolytic cleavage of the pro-peptide by the metalloprotease, thereby increasing myostatin activation.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said contacting is performed on a sample *in vitro*.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the sample comprises a cell sample, a tissue sample, or a biological fluid sample.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said contacting is performed *in vivo*, said method comprising administering the agent to a subject.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the agent decreases proteolytic cleavage of the pro-peptide by the metalloprotease, thereby reducing or inhibiting myostatin activation.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein, in the subject, muscle mass is increased, fat content is decreased, or a combination thereof.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the subject is an animal raised as a food source.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the animal is a mammalian species, an avian species, or a piscine species.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein mammalian species is an ovine species, a porcine species, or a bovine species.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the avian species is a chicken or a turkey.

15. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the subject is a human subject.

In Re Application of:  
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Application Serial No.: 10/665,374  
Filed: September 16, 2003  
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PATENT  
Attorney Docket No.: JHU1800-3

16.-66. (Canceled).